

Maurice Hinchey NEWS

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MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY TRAINING INITIATIVE RECEIVES \$213,000 GRANT

FERNDAL - U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey (NY-26) today announced that a \$213,000 grant he secured in an appropriations bill has been released to the Sullivan-Wawarsing Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP) Zone. Working with the Ulster County Development Corporation, the REAP Zone will use the grant for the initial stages of a manufacturing technology training program.

"Manufacturers in the area have expressed to me their desire for a local program that would produce workers with the skills necessary to use and maintain state-of-the-art technology," said Hinchey. "Such a program will help these employers and will make our workers more employable and promotable."

A member of the House Appropriations Committee, Hinchey earmarked the funding for this initiative in an omnibus spending bill passed into law in December 2000. The Sullivan-Wawarsing REAP Zone subsequently established a partnership with the Ulster County Development Corporation to explore the creation of the Mid-Hudson Manufacturing Technology Training Center. The funds, which will be used for planning and development, were released after UCDC submitted the necessary project proposal.

The training center will be designed to teach the skills required for proficiency in the programming and operation of modern machine technology. It will attempt to address training needs of manufacturers throughout the Hudson Valley and Catskills regions.

"Throughout the Mid-Hudson Region there is a growing demand for trained personnel to operate and maintain current and future generations of manufacturing equipment," said UCDC Executive Director Chester Straub. "This demand goes beyond traditional communication, math, and basic mechanical skills training provided through existing educational and vocational programs. The key to meeting these new training needs is the development of a Mid-Hudson Manufacturing Technology Training Center that will allow area businesses to meet their current staffing needs and remain competitive in an ever changing global marketplace."